

What is claimed is:

JC17 Rec'd PCT/PTO 09 JUN 2005

1-9. (cancelled)

10. (new) Refractory plate for a device for the insertion and/or removal of a nozzle for a casting installation combined with a sliding plate flow-control device comprising

- a) a first surface provided with an orifice defining the entry of a casting channel through the plate and able to form a sealing surface, at least around the orifice, with a face matching the face of a sliding plate of the flow-control device;
- b) a second surface adapted to rest in housing of the device and provided with a plane protuberance circumscribing the casting channel and extending through the bottom wall of the housing, and
- c) a tip-shaped third surface defined by the plane surface of the protuberance provided with an orifice defining the exit of the casting channel through the plate, the surface being adapted (i) to form a sealing surface, at least around the orifice, with a matching face of a refractory nozzle in casting position, and (ii) to act as guiding surface for the refractory nozzle from an introduction position to a casting position, the tip being directed towards the introduction position of the refractory nozzle.

11. (new) Refractory plate according to claim 10, wherein the third surface is provided with a chamfer at the end of the tip.

12. (new) Refractory plate according to claim 10, wherein the third surface is provided with a chamfer on the side opposite to the end of the tip.

13. (new) Refractory plate according to claim 10, wherein the third surface is oval-shaped.

14. (new) Refractory plate according to claim 10, wherein the third surface is triangle shaped.

15. (new) Refractory plate according to claim 10, wherein the third surface is egg-shaped.
16. (new) Refractory plate according to claim 10, wherein it is provided with inert gas supplying means.
17. (new) Refractory plate according to claim 16, wherein the inert gas supplying means comprises a gas feeding line and a circular groove circumscribing the exit orifice of the casting channel in the third surface.
18. (new) Refractory plate according to claim 10, wherein the third surface is provided with a second orifice close to the end of the tip.